

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 12553 031522Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00
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P 031424Z JUN 78

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2550

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

USMISSION USNATO

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 12553

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, CZ, UR

SUBJECT: BREZHNEV'S PERFORMANCE ON JUNE 2

REF: (A) PRAGUE 1415, (B) MOSCOW 12354

1. JUDGING FROM SOVIET TV'S COVERAGE OF BREZHNEV'S
ACTIVITIES IN PRAGUE ON JUNE 2, BREZHNEV'S SPEAKING
ABILITY DECLINED CONSIDERABLY FROM HIS RELATIVELY GOOD
PERFORMANCE ON MAY 31. FOR EXAMPLE:

--IN HIS BRIEF THANK-YOU SPEECH FOLLOWING RECEIPT
OF A CZECHOSLOVAK MEDAL, BREZHNEV'S VOICE SOUNDED
THICK; THE AUDIO WAS EDITED IN SEVERAL SPOTS,
PROBABLY TO TAKE OUT FLUFFS; HE SOUNDED AS IF HE HAD
CONGESTION IN HIS THROAT;
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--HIS DELIVERY OF A 4-5 MINUTE TOAST AT THE FINAL
RECEPTION IN PRAGUE STRUCK US AS SOMEWHAT WORSE THAN
COMPARABLE PERFORMANCES BY LEONID IL'ICH IN THE
FRG; HE SPOKE VERY SLOWLY; HIS VOICE WAS THICK; THE
AUDIO WAS EDITED IN AT LEAST THREE PLACES (IT WAS
DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE THE EXACT FREQUENCY OF EDITING,

BECAUSE THE TV CAMERA RARELY SHOWED CLOSE-UPS OF BREZHNEV'S FACE, SO THAT ONE COULD NOT ACCURATELY ASSESS THE SYNCHRONIZATION BETWEEN HIS LIPS AND HIS VOICE AS TELECAST);

--AS HEARD ON TV, THERE WERE IN ADDITION THREE OR FOUR AWKWARD PAUSES DURING THE TOAST, WHICH MAY ALSO HAVE STEMMED FROM EDITING OF THE AUDIO PORTION OF THE TAPE.

2. BREZHNEV'S PHYSICAL MOVEMENTS, AS SHOWN ON TV, SEEMED NORMAL. IN PARTICULAR, THE SOVIET TV CAMERA SHOWED HIM DESCENDING THE STAIRS FROM THE PLANE, UPON HIS RETURN TO MOSCOW THE EVENING OF JUNE 2. HE CAME DOWN SLOWLY, WITH ONE OF HIS SECURITY GUARDS AT HIS ELBOW AND POISED TO SUPPORT BREZHNEV'S ARM, BUT THIS DID NOT PROVE NECESSARY. DURING THE GREETINGS AND HANDSHAKING AT PLANE-SIDE, ONE OF THE MILITARY OFFICERS COULD BE HEARD ASKING BREZHNEV ABOUT THE WEATHER IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA. "IT WAS HOT," BREZHNEV QUICKLY REPLIED IN NORMAL TONES, "AROUND 20 DEGREES." MATLOCK

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
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